

Fish Fingerlings Production Started at Mahadiwulwewa Tank in December 2001

The production of freshwater fish fingerlings in Trincomalee district started in December 2001 when Mahadiwulwewa Fisheries Cooperative Society (FCS) stocked 40,000 common carp fry (small fish of 1.25cm in length) in eight floating cages of 120m³ in the Mahadiwulwewa tank. The fry were purchased from the National Aquaculture Development Authority's (NAQDA's) Aquaculture Development Centre at Dambulla and transported to Mahadiwulwewa tank by IFSP in big plastic containers. IFSP earlier purchased eight floating cages for the Mahadiwulwewa FCS. In January 2002 Mahadiwulwewa FCS plans to harvest 30,000 carp fingerlings (4cm in length) and sell them to local Farmer's Organisations at Rs 1.5 per fingerling. This is part of IFSP's programme to promote fish production in seasonal minor irrigation tanks.



Releasing the fry into the cages

The seasonal minor irrigation tanks are ideal for the production of fast growing varieties of fish like carps. Technical trials indicate potential yields of over 750 kg of fish per ha of water surface area, so a four-ha tank could produce over 3 tons of fish. Fish culture in seasonal minor irrigation tanks offers Farmer's Organisations a new source of em-

ployment and income. FOs elsewhere in Sri Lanka have harvested fish at a value of over Rs 150,000 from their tanks, after stocking carp fingerlings. This year IFSP is working with five Farmer's Organisations in Gomarankadawala, Padavisiripura and Muthur DS Divisions. Action groups for fishing have been formed at four minor tanks, within the relevant Farmer's Organisations.

Fish farming would contribute to a significant improvement of the availability of and access to high quality food. Locally produced fish is considered the basic protein supply for village communities.

Mahadiwulwewa FCS

Fifteen fishermen from Mahadiwulwewa FCS completed a two day training programme in "cage culture of fish fingerlings" organised by IFSP and



Thousands of fish fry are stocked in the cages

conducted by NAQDA's Regional Extension Officer in Anuradhapura in September 2001. The fishermen constructed the cages and organised the stocking of fish fry. They have rotated the responsibility for feeding the fry and cleaning the cages among themselves. The FCS view fish fingerling production as both new source of employment and

income for their society's credit programme and also an opportunity to regularly stock their own tank with fingerlings, which are not always available from through local government stocking programmes. NAQDA's Regional Aquaculture Extension Office in Anuradhapura is providing bimonthly technical support to the FCS. IFSP in turn is providing support for capacity building within the society to manage the cage culture operation.

IFSP's objectives

IFSP is keen to support the development of tank fishing in Trincomalee district as a complementary measure to the "75 minor tank development programme". There are about 400 seasonal minor irrigation tanks in Trincomalee district. 200 minor tanks have potential for irrigation and some of them could be used for fish farming. Many Farmer's Organisations are not aware of their tank's potential to produce fish and generate income for their organisation. Another problem is the national shortage of fingerlings. IFSP aims to forge links between FOs and the FCS at Mahadiwulwewa. Mahadiwulwewa is to be developed as local fish rearing centre. IFSP is promoting awareness about the potential of fish culture to generate additional income from the tank, to create additional



Discussion with fishermen

employment opportunities for village communities and a better supply of high quality protein.

This year the FCS at Mahadiwulwewa is supplying fish fingerlings to Farmers Organisations at Karagahawewa (Gomarankadawela DS Division), Welauwewa / Morawewa DS Division), Ithikulam

and Puthukulam (Muthur DS Division). IFSP is also supporting tank management for fisheries with the FO at Iramaduwa (Padavisiripura DS Division).

The production of fish in minor tanks will create greater access to fish for people living in villages outside the production areas. Fish production is expected to strengthen the village food security. IFSP plans to expand this programme. The aim is to strengthen the capacity of Farmer's Organisations, to create additional employment and income and to improve the access to nutritional food for the village households.

Season's Party 2001

A get together to celebrate the end of the year 2001 took place on 20 December. All IFSP staff participated. IFSP management organised a quiz with a prize giving for the winning teams. Staff members presented games and sketches. The season's party was concluded with dinner.



Work Programme 2002

The second phase of IFSP started in July 2001 and will continue until December 2003. For the year 2002 emphasis will be on the following key areas:

- Concentrating on projects and activities which directly address better availability, access and use and utilisation of food
- Improving the quality of work, conducting impact monitoring and enhancing sustainability
- Promoting community based organisations (CBO) as implementing partners of IFSP
- Promoting small scale business and employment through the "Village Development Fund" together with CBOs.



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